

STEVEN JOHNSON SYNDROME (SJS) DISEASE

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In view of the findings of the DOLE mission to Taiwan which validated that the Steven Johnson Syndrome (SJS) which affected several Filipino workers in 1996-1997 is now reasonably under control and that measures are in place to prevent the recurrence of the disease, the suspension on the deployment of Filipino workers to the Philips Electronics Industries Chupei and Dapon plants is hereby ordered to be temporarily lifted.

The concerned agencies of the Department of Labor and Employment, specifically the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Occupational and Safety and Health Center (OSHC) are however directed to undertake further measures to sustain the control of the disease:

1. A monitoring system on SJS be put in place through the creation of a rapid response team from both Taiwan and Philippines, and to install medical surveillance and environmental assessment programs.
2. Screening for HLA-B62 should be carried out as a temporary measure to identify susceptible individuals among the short list of applicants for Taiwan, but not for all applicants owing to the cost.

3. Information campaign on SJS should be carried out

among applicants and among OFWs before leaving and during their stay to ensure ready access to medical support, information of occupational safety and health in general as well as advocacy for satisfactory working conditions in the factories and dormitories.

4. A review on the financial protection and health of workers affected by occupational illness abroad be undertaken.

5. Research on SJS should be undertaken among locals and OFWs in Taiwan.

6. Generally, efforts should be made to include occupational safety and health concerns in pre-departure briefings and training of labor attaches and welfare officers, among others.

7. A review of the measures recommended shall be carried out after a period of six (6) months or when it becomes necessary under the circumstances.

8. Regular reports on the functioning of the technical working group and the implementation of its findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Secretary of Labor and Employment.

This Order takes effect immediately.

For compliance.

Adopted: 27 May 1998

(SGD.) CRESENCIANO B. TRAJANO
Secretary

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